

## Message Text

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43

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 IGA-02 HEW-08 IO-12 PA-03 PRS-01

USIE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 EUR-25 MED-03

CCO-00 SSO-00 SS-14 NSCE-00 NSC-10 INRE-00 DODE-00

RSR-01 /160 W

----- 075718

O 311658 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1341

UNCLAS TUNIS 1716

E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: SWEL, TS

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN FLOOD DISASTER CTF 60 FEATURE STORY NO. 2

AIDAC FOR DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR

FOLLOWING CTF SIX ZERO MESSAGE SENT TUNIS 311334 Z MAR 73

REPEATED YOU

QUOTE

O P 311334 Z MAR 73

FM CTF SIX ZERO

TO CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENGLAND

CHINFO WASH DC

INFO COMSIXTHFLT

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

CINCUSAFE ADVON RAMSTEIN GERMANY

CINCUSAFE REAR LINDSEY GERMANY

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GERMANY

AMEMB TUNIS TUNISIA

INO WASH DC

USS FORRESTAL

USS SAMPSON

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TUNISIAN FLOOD DISASTER CTF 60 FEATURE STORY NO 2

QUOTE

" WITH THE U. S. SIXTH FLEET IN THE MEDITERRANEAN"  
ONBOARD USS FORRESTAL IN THE BAY OF TUNIS, TUNISIA-- MARCH 30--  
FIRST LIGHT TODAY HERE WAS SHATTERED BY THE ROAR OF HELICOPTERS

FROM FOUR NATIONS, LEAD BY THOSE OF THE ATTACK AIRCRAFT CARRIER  
FORRESTAL, AS THEY CUT THROUGH THE CHILL AND DRIZZLE TO SAVE  
THOUSANDS OF FLOOD VICTIMS IN TUNISIA.

HELICOPTERS FROM USS FORRESTAL, USS PONCE, THE ITALIAN AIR FORCE,  
THE LYBIAN AIR FORCE, AND THE TUNISIAN ARMY CONTINUED TO FLY LOW  
OVER THE FLOODED MEDJERDA RIVER VALLEY, PLUCKING VICTIMS FROM ROOF  
TOPS, TREES, SMALL POINTS OF EARTH JUTTING FROM THE SURGING FLOOD  
WATERS, AND EVEN FROM THE MUDDY TORRENT ITSELF.

OTHERS, THE LARGER U. S. MARINE CORPS CH-53'S DELIVERED TONS OF  
BREAD, BLANKETS, FOOD STAPLES AND TENTS TO SOME OF THE 2,000 VICTIMS  
WHO HAD ALREADY BEEN MOVED TO HIGH GROUND.

HELICOPTERS HOVERED LOW OVER VICTIMS AS THEY CLIMBED INTO RESCUE  
NETS. ONE U. S. HELICOPTER FROM FORRESTAL TOOK ABOARD A RECORD 38  
PEOPLE AND GINGERLY LANDED AT TUNIS AIRPORT, THE ONLY AREA WHERE  
HEAVILY LADEN AIRCRAFT COULD SAFELY LAND.

HARDEST HIT WAS THE DELTA REGION NORTHWEST OF TUNIS, BUT THE  
ENTIRE BASIN, FROM THE RIVER'S MOUTH TO ITS SOURCE NEAR THE ALGERIAN  
BORDER HAD BEEN SEVERELY AFFECTED.

WHILE THE MAJOR EFFORT IN THE DELTA AREA WHERE FLOOD WATERS WERE  
STILL CRESTING WAS EMERGENCY RESCUE, THE LARGER U. S. AND LYBIAN  
HELOS  
DELIVERED MANY TONS OF RELIEF SUPPLIES FURTHER RIVER WHERE  
NEARLY ALL THE VICTIMS HAD BEEN RESCUED AND FLOOD WATERS WERE  
NOTICEABLY  
RECEDING.

AS THE FLOOD RECEDES, A NEW CRISIS IS RISING. GOOD WATER IS  
NEEDED. OFFICIALS IN THE CITY OF TUNIS, WHERE FRESH WATER IS STILL  
AVAILABLE, ARE SENDING THE CITY WATER IN ALL MANNER OF PORTABLE  
CONTAINERS BY HELO TO STRICKEN AREAS.

NAVY HOSPITAL CORPSMEN AND DOCTORS FROM FORRESTAL HAVE TEAMED  
WITH  
AN INTERNATIONAL FORCE OF DOCTORS, TO ESTABLISH EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
AID STATIONS AT REFUGEE RELOCATION CENTERS ON THE RIM OF THE DISASTER  
AREA. PLANS ARE BEING MADE TO AVERT POSSIBLE EPIDEMIC OUTBREAKS OF  
DISEASES USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH FLOOD DISASTERS.

MEDICAL PERSONNEL REPORT ONLY A FEW MINOR INJURY CASES AND PEOPLE  
SUFFERING FROM EXPOSURE HAVE BEEN TREATED AT THE EMERGENCY  
STATIONS.

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OBSERVERS AT THE DISASTER RELIEF CONTROL CENTER AND AMERICAN EMBASSY, VIEW THE MOST IMPRESSIVE ELEMENT OF THE DISASTER RELIEF EFFORTS AS THE RAPID RESPONSE BY THE ARMED FORCES OF TUNISIA, ITALY, LIBYA AND THE UNITED STATES. LESS THAN 12 HOURS AFTER HELP WAS REQUESTED, FORRESTAL HELICOPTERS ARRIVED AT TUNIS.

THE RESCUE AND RELIEF EFFORTS GO ON AROUND THE CLOCK.

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\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* UNCLASSIFIED

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